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INFO ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE
ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 006864

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NSC FOR WATERS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/14/2016

TAGS: PGOV PHUM KDEM KISL EG

SUBJECT: SADAT BROTHER APPRECIATES USG SUPPORT, ADVOCATES
NEW GOE APPROACH TO MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD

REF: A. CAIRO 6736

1B. CAIRO 6600

1C. CAIRO 3582

CLASSIFIED BY: MINISTER-COUNSELOR FOR ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL AFFAIRS
WILLIAM R. STEWART, FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

11. (C) INDEPENDENT PARLIAMENTARIAN ANWAR EL SADAT (BROTHER OF
IMPRISONED MP TALAAT EL SADAT, AND NEPHEW OF ASSASSINATED
PRESIDENT ANWAR EL SADAT) DELIVERED A LECTURE TITLED
"INDEPENDENTS IN THE PARLIAMENT" ON NOVEMBER 9 AT THE
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO. IN A BRIEF CONVERSATION WITH
POLOFF ON THE MARGINS OF THE EVENT, SADAT NOTED HIS FAMILYS
APPRECIATION OF THE RECENT COMMENTS OF THE STATE DEPARTMENTS
SPOKESMAN REGARDING THE TALAAT EL SADAT CASE (REFS A AND B).
HE ALSO FLAGGED HIS CONCERN THAT HIS BROTHER'S PARLIAMENTARY
SEAT AND MEMBERSHIP WILL LIKELY SOON BE REVOKED, MEANING
TALAAT WILL NOT BE ABLE TO RESUME HIS PARLIAMENTARY-LEVEL
POLITICAL ACTIVITIES WHEN HE IS RELEASED FROM PRISON IN A
YEAR'S TIME.

12. (SBU) ANWAR EL SADAT'S LECTURE WAS NOTEWORTHY IN THAT THE
PARLIAMENTARIAN, A LIBERAL INDEPENDENT AND STRONG ADVOCATE OF
SECULARISM, VOICED PUBLICLY HIS OPPOSITION TO THE GOE'S
"EXCLUSIONARY" APPROACH TO THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD (MB).
SADAT OBJECTED TO THE GOE'S LIKELY AMENDING OF THE
CONSTITUTION TO ALLOW FOR A PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION-PARTY
LIST ELECTORAL SYSTEM INSTEAD OF THE CURRENT SINGLE-DISTRICT
SYSTEM, ARGUING THAT THE "SOLE BASIS" FOR CHANGING THE
ELECTORAL SYSTEM IS TO "GET RID OF THE MB (BY ELIMINATING OR
RESTRICTING THE ABILITY OF CANDIDATES TO RUN AS
INDEPENDENTS), WHICH DEMONSTRATES THE GOVERNMENT'S MISTAKEN
THINKING ON THIS ISSUE. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO GET RID OF THE
MB." SADAT ADVOCATED FOR A "REALISTIC APPROACH" TO THE MB,
NOTING THAT "THEY ARE PART OF THE POLITICAL REALITY HERE, AND
EGYPT MUST CHANGE THE WAY IT DEALS WITH THEM OFFICIALLY."
WHILE NOTING THAT THE MB IS "ORGANIZED AND EFFECTIVE," SADAT
OPINED THAT THE ORGANIZATION IS NOT "SO POPULAR THAT WE
SHOULD BE SCARED ... IN FACT, THE MORE THEY ARE FORBIDDEN,
THE MORE WE BOLSTER THEIR APPEAL AMONG THE EGYPTIAN
POPULACE."

13. (SBU) SADAT, WHILE CALLING FOR "REAL" REFORM THROUGH
CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS, WAS NOT OPTIMISTIC ABOUT IMPENDING
CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES, NOTING THAT, "REGRETTABLY, THERE ARE
NO GOOD INTENTIONS ON THE PART OF THE GOE WITH REGARD TO
POLITICAL REFORM." SADAT WAS CRITICAL OF THE GOE'S
"PROHIBITIVE" POLITICAL PARTY REGISTRATION PROCESS, CITING
THE DECADE-OLD LEGAL FIGHT FOR THE WASAT AND KARAMA PARTIES
TO FORMALLY REGISTER AS PARTIES (REF C) AS PROOF THAT THE
GOVERNMENT WILL NOT ALLOW "SERIOUS" OPPOSITION PARTIES TO
COMPETE IN THE ELECTORAL ARENA. SADAT ALSO HIGHLIGHTED
"SENSITIVITY" AMONG PARLIAMENTARIANS TO "WORKING WITH THE

WEST," ESPECIALLY THE U.S., OR BEING PERCEIVED AS SUCH, IN
LARGE PART "BECAUSE THE GOE ABUSES SUCH PERCEPTIONS TO TARGET
MP,S THEY DISAGREE WITH."

RICCIARDONE